WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Contribution to ESIC

*303 SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the annual contribution of employees and employers to the Employees State Insurance Corporation, during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 (estimated), indicating the number of employees contributing to it;

(b) the number of hospitals, indicating the total bed strength, dispensaries and the number of doctors and paramedical staff employed in ESI hospitals and dispensaries, year-wise;

(c) the expenditure incurred on running the ESI health services for employees' during each year and the savings by ESI each year;

(d) whether the savings have been utilised; and

(c) whether they are simply retained as saving or utilised on workers beneficial schemes?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (e) The ESI Scheme is a self-financing social security scheme. The Scheme not only provides for medical care but also for payment of various cash benefits to the insured persons in the contigencies of sickness, maternity and employment injury. The Scheme also bears its own administrative cost. The information showing progressive coverage of employers, employees contribution income, total revenue expenditure under the ESI Scheme, year wise is as under:—

Year	No. of employers	No. of employees	Contribution Income	Total Revenue Expenditure on benefits etc. (Rs. in Crores)	Surplus/ Deficit
1996-97	2,00,471	77,31,650	604.51	598.21 (315.55)	6.30
1997-98	2,12,931	83,61,900	1187.32	1007.11 (396.51)	180.21

(Figures in bracket indicate expenditure on medical care)

Position regarding coverage of employees, contribution income and expenditure on various benefits during 1998-99 will become known only after the close of the financial year.

Information about number of hospitals/ dispensaries/doctors etc. under the ESI Scheme during the last two years was as under:—

		1996-97	1997-98
1.	No. of ESI Hospitals	127	129
2.	Total Bed strength No. of	23,334	23,692
3.	ESI Dispenseries No. of	1,443	1,450
4.	Doctors Para medical	6,220	6,059
5.	staff	13,913	14,690

As an insurance scheme the ESI Scheme is required to meet its current expenditure from the current income. The ESI Scheme provides for payment of life long monthly pension in the contingencies of death of disablement due to employment injury. These contingencies are unforeseen and precisely not quantifiable. Therefore, it is imperative to maintain certain reserve funds to meet recurring and constant liabilities arising out of the scheme. Accordingly, the ESI Funds have been invested as par the scheme for ensuring smooth flow of benefits to the insured persons on a continuous basis. Benefits under the ESI Scheme are being liberalised/enhanced from time to time.

In order to compensate the erosion in the real value of permanent disablement benefit and dependant benefit pensions, enhancements based on the rise in the cost of living index have been granted with effect from 1.8.97. The minimum rate of sickness benefit has been enhanced from Rs. 2.50 per day to Rs. 14.00 per day with effect from 19.9.98. An action plan for modernising ESI hospitals and dispensaries at a total cost of Rs. 60.00 crore has been formulated and circulated among the State Governments for implementation in consultation with the ESIC.

Complaint against CPWD/Estatc Office in Consumer Court

*305. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM: Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether an allottee of Government accommodation, who is paying (i) Licence Fee (ii) not getting House Rent Allowance (iii) and making payments as per order No. 11014/22/90-W-3 dated the 5th January 1998, (Ministry of Urban Affairs) for additions and alterations in the accommodation, can file a complaint in a Consumer Court, if there is deficiency in the services rendered by the CPWD/Estate Officer, under Consumer Protection Act, 1986;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) to (c) The laws of the land do not forbid any person from filing any complaint in any Court including the Consumer Disputes Redressal Agencies. However, it is for the Court to decide the admissibility of the complaint. This Ministry can not and is not expected to provide legal opinions on hypothetical cases.

Closure of PSUs

*309. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHER-JEE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a newsitem "Centre to dose down 11 PSUs; Bakht" published in the 'Statesman' dated the 26 November, 1998;

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereto;

(c) the number of PSUs proposed to be disinvested to less than fifty percent of Government equity;

(d) the number of PSUs under reference to BIFR;

(e) the number of PSUs referred to Disinvestment Commission so far; and

(f) the names of PSUs considered to be strategic by Government?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) Govt. has taken a decision to extend benefits of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) to employees of following unviable Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) of the Department of Heavy Industry (DHI) which are facing the prospect of winding up.

S. NO.	Name of the PSU	No. of em-ployees	Status
1.	National Instruments Ltd. (NIL)	863	Prima-facie conclusion by BIFR for winding up
2.	Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Ltd (BOGL)	472	Prima-facie conclusion by BIFR for winding up.
3.	Weighbird India Ltd. (WIL)	183	Final decision by BIFR for winding up.